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House Group Calls for Singapore Case Details

Foreign Affairs Subcommittee to Hold
Closed-Door Hearings on CIA Incident

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Attack Cited

Many diplomatic experts felt that Lee's attack on the United States was aimed at the establishment of Singapore's credentials as an independent state and probably as a member of the non-aligned Afro-Asian bloc.

WASHINGTON — A House foreign affairs subcommittee will hold closed-door hearings next week to look into an abortive Central Intelligence Agency plot that took place in late 1960 in Singapore.

Rep. Clement J. Zablocki (D-Wis.) said Thursday his subcommittee on the Far East wants the administration to explain bribery and espionage charges leveled against the American government by Singapore's prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew.

The subcommittee also is expected to investigate the reasons why the State Department originally denied Lee's claim that the United States offered him \$3.3 million for personal and political use in return for his silence about the arrest of a CIA agent.

Lee said the CIA official had been caught red-handed attempting to buy state secrets from a Singapore government official.

Zablocki told reporters next week's hearings could not be termed an investigation.

Seeks Details on CIA

"What we're interested in is a report of what has transpired . . ." he said. "I am interested in knowing how the CIA operates."

Zablocki said the State Department's Tuesday denial was "most unfortunate." On Wednesday the department, highly embarrassed over the incident, reversed its position when Lee released a letter from Secretary of State Dean Rusk apologizing for the "improper activities" of certain U. S. officials in Singapore.

Congressional hearings in the controversy may raise the old question of whether a special legislative committee ought to be established to scrutinize the activities of the CIA.

Lee's bitter denunciation of the U. S. intelligence operation left the administration somewhat puzzled. The real question is why the prime minister at this time chose to resurrect the incident five years after the fact and particularly in light of Rusk's letter of apology dated September, 1961.

Singapore declared its independence after seceding from the Malaysian Federation early last month.

It also was believed that Lee's tirade against this country was meant as an indirect warning to Britain which maintains a huge naval base in Singapore. U.S. officials called attention to the prime minister's threat that he is capable of asking the British to leave his tiny city-state on 24 hours notice.

In short, Lee apparently is firing at the Western position in Asia as part of a wider effort to steer a middle course through the explosive cold war politics of that part of the world.

He also reportedly is under some economic pressure from Singapore's business community to increase trade with left-leaning Indonesia.

Accordingly, his noisy, anti-Western outbursts of the last couple of days seem to fit a pattern of trying to mollify any pressures from the far left that might confront Singapore in the near future.

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